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Application of an intergovernmental organization for observer status with the Economic and Social Council

Letter dated 9 February 2015 from the Director-General of the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council

The International Network for Bamboo and Rattan is an international intergovernmental organization established in 1997 under the Agreement on the Establishment of the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan.[1] The global headquarters of the International Network is located at 8 Fu Tong Dong Da Jie, Beijing, and regional offices have been established in Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana and India.

The International Network has developed from a small group of key bamboo-producing countries into a global network of 40 member States from Africa, the Americas and the Asia and Pacific region. The organization is governed by a council of all members that convenes every two years. The 2015-2016 session of the council is chaired by Jamaica, with Ghana as the Co-Chair.

The Board of Trustees of the organization is currently co-chaired by the former Deputy Director-General of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Maharaj Muthoo; and academic Jiang Zehui of China. Other Trustees include senior representatives from China, Ethiopia and Indonesia, as well as the former Director-General of the United Nations Forum on Forests, the former Director of the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture and a former senior executive of the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation of the European Commission. The Director-General of the organization, Hans Friederich, is an ex officio member of the Board. The organization convenes an annual meeting of the Board and frequent bilateral interactions during the year.

The mission of the organization is to promote the well-being of producers and users of bamboo and rattan, within the context of a sustainable resource base. The

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, Vol. 2673, I-47531.

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organization is the world's leading knowledge centre for bamboo and rattan development and a major force for South-South and North-South collaboration across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

The past 17 years have served as a basis for understanding, describing and demonstrating the methods for producing, transforming and commercializing bamboo and rattan as ecologically sustainable and economically attractive alternatives for a range of products, including pulp and paper, textiles, fuel, construction materials and furniture.

A new strategy for the period 2015-2030 for the organization has been developed, to be guided by the sustainable development goals. The new goals will form the overarching framework for the post-2015 development agenda. While the goals are still under discussion, it is already clear that bamboo and rattan could play a significant role in contributing towards achieving success in many of the probable focus areas, as is explained in the attachment.[2]

On the basis of its constitution as an international intergovernmental organization with 40 member States and the direct contributions that it and its members are making towards several of the sustainable development goals, the organization wishes to be considered for observer status with the Economic and Social Council.

The International Network is already recognized as having observer status with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity. It also has observer status with the Forum on Forests and participates in the FAO Committee on Forestry. The organization has a partnership agreement with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and has been asked to take part in the second United Nations Environment Assembly, to be held in 2016.

Copies of the establishment agreement, the registration of the Agreement on the Establishment of the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan and clarification of the contribution of bamboo and rattan in the context of the sustainable development goals are attached.[2]

The organization looks forward to receiving further guidance on the next steps that it should take to achieve its goal.

(*Signed*) Hans **Friederich**
Director-General

[2] The attachments are on file with the Secretariat and are available for consultation.